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SCIENCE

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THE PRACTICAL CLASSIFICATION OF SOILS

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Relation of the Soil to Agricultural Practise.—The comprehensive study of agricultural questions which has arisen in recent years has revealed the necessity for accurate information on the character and distribution of soil conditions. It is being more clearly recognized how fundamentally the soil enters into all questions of agricultural betterment, both scientific and practical. Not only does the intelligent management of the soil rest upon a proper appreciation of the inherent physical, chemical and biological variations in soils in different parts of the country, but the suitability of these to different crops, the adjustment of the crops which can best be produced to the business organization of the farm, its size, equipment, money product, transportation and market facilities, and the social life of the community are involved. The application of the results of the investigation of the institutions for agricultural research—the experiment stations, the colleges of agriculture and the federal and state departments of agriculture—must take account first of all of soil conditions. Types and varieties of crops, methods of culture, tillage, drainage, irrigation and fertilization give better results upon some types of soil than upon others. Those which are well suited to one soil may be a total failure upon some other soil. The experiment stations have often confined their study to one or two types of soil on the central institution farm. It is only within very recent years that the importance of carrying on investigations at substations, upon the several typical soil